

community, his love for his family and his commitment to advance and strengthen the health care and social issues that impact impoverished people so often overlooked. Paul was unwilling to look the other way, and it is for his unrelenting efforts that we celebrate his life.

Mr. White learned from personal experience what certain sacrifices economically disadvantaged people are forced to make. He was born in Oklahoma City in 1947 as one of six children, raised by their mother in a house without running water or electricity. Paul's mother passed on when he was 11 and his grandparents raised all six children in Fresno.

Not to be overcome by tragedy, Paul graduated from Edison High School in 1962 as a star basketball player and school leader. He immediately began his college career at Fresno City College, where he received his Associate in Arts degree in 1968. Dedicated to being better equipped in life, Paul furthered his education at California State University, Fresno where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration and his Masters in Public Administration.

Paul always made sure everyone around him appreciated the many wonders life had to offer. In January of 1983, Paul had complete kidney failure. In 1986 his then 14-year-old daughter LaShelly had complete kidney failure as well. That same year, both Paul and LaShelly received a kidney transplant from the same donor. To think of the generosity of strangers during their time of loss, was very humbling to the family. Paul and his loved ones endured incredible health hardships, which allowed for his appreciation of life to grow and be passed on to the many lives he touched. Paul's family triumphed over dialysis as well as kidney transplants making their ties even stronger with each other.

Mr. White has served the Fresno community for over 30 years. His record of community service is quite long and includes membership in many different organizations. He was a member of the United Network for Organ Sharing, Minority Affairs Committee, California Donor Transplant Network, California Department of Health Services and Leadership Committee for the Black Infant Health Project. Paul was on the Board of Directors for West Fresno Health Care Coalition, Inc, the Marjaree Mason Center and the Boy Scouts of America.

His contributions have not gone unnoticed; some of his most notable awards include the Fresno Metro Ministry Award for "Living Out the Values of Justice in our Community," State of California Lieutenant Governor Cruz M. Bustamante, "Commendation," California State Senate and Assembly "Certificate of Recognition," California Transplant Donor Network "Excellence Award," and United Black Men of Fresno "President's Award" and "Certificate of Appreciation."

It goes without saying that Mr. Paul White was a positive influence in this community. His commitment to help those in need will forever live on in the lives of the people he so graciously touched.

CONGRESSIONAL TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT DENNIS KOZIKOWSKI

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding member of the Menominee County Sheriff's Department, Sergeant Dennis Kozikowski. This year, Sgt. Kozikowski retired as the Road Patrol Sergeant for the Menominee County Sheriff's Department. During his retirement, he plans to continue another passion of his—working to promote veteran rights. Sgt. Kozikowski's 30 years as a law enforcement officer and his leadership for veteran causes stands as a shining example to us all.

Born to John and Lillian Kozikowski in Menominee, Michigan, Sgt. Kozikowski graduated from Menominee High School in 1965. He immediately joined the Army and requested to serve in the Vietnam War. After completing his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, Sgt. Kozikowski spent time serving at posts in Alabama and California before receiving his orders to serve in Vietnam.

Sgt. Kozikowski's 15-month tour in Vietnam impacted him in a way that changed his life. Sgt. Kozikowski earned the Army Commendation Medal, two Air Medals with "V" Devices for Valor Under Fire, Air Medals with 19 Oak Leaf Clusters because of 2000 aerial combat hours, Medal of Good Conduct, and medals awarded by the Republic of Vietnam including the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with a Bronze Star, the Vietnam National Defense Ribbon and Vietnam Campaign Medal. Even as a decorated soldier, Sgt. Kozikowski recalls struggling to adjust upon his return. Although this transition served as a challenging time in his life, he credits this ability to eventually adjust back to civilian life as an experience that enabled him reach out to other veterans.

Sgt. Kozikowski found his calling in 1975 under the direction of colleague and mentor Sheriff Dean R. Burns. Sheriff Burns urged Dennis Kozikowski to consider law enforcement as a career based on his expert military training and courage under fire. Sgt. Kozikowski joined the Menominee County Sheriff's Department where he would spend the next 30 years in skilled positions such as the Marine Patrol, a Department Diver, Snow Patrol, and with Marine Safety. Sgt. Kozikowski received many letters of commendation for critical incidents he handled while a member of the Sheriff's Department.

When asked to talk about his brave deeds during his service with the Sheriff's Department, Sgt. Kozikowski humbly recalls a story of a Vietnam Veteran who had become frustrated with his inability to adjust to civilian life. The man went into a local bar and began shooting. Although the patrons inside were not injured, emergency response units concluded that force would be necessary to remove the armed man. Sgt. Kozikowski bravely entered the building, disarmed the man and took him into custody peacefully.

Sgt. Kozikowski said that he was successful in communicating with the frustrated veteran because he could relate to him. Sgt. Kozikowski not only used that common factor to help talk him out of the threatening incident, but after the fact he helped the veteran file a

disability claim to receive veterans benefits. Noting the challenges veterans face upon return from Vietnam, Sgt. Kozikowski understood that he had a knack for reaching out to veterans to help them understand that resources were available to assist their needs. From that one incident, Sgt. Kozikowski began a decade of advocacy on behalf of veterans on a variety of issues. As a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1887 and a lifetime member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 25 serving as the Legislative Chair, Sgt. Kozikowski works to promote veteran rights for better benefits.

This year, Sgt. Kozikowski was forced to retire early due to a spinal injury that has made his challenging work in law enforcement nearly impossible. A testament to his dedication to public service, he will tell you that this day came far too soon as he is sure he could serve for another 30 years easily. However, Sgt. Kozikowski looks forward to spending additional time with his two sons, John and Joe, who have followed valiantly in their father's footsteps; John as a member of the 82nd Airborne during Desert Storm; and Joe as a Carney-Nadeau Volunteer Fire Department and a member of the Menominee County Rescue Squad. Sgt. Kozikowski also looks forward to spending time with his two granddaughters, Kaitlin and Hanna, as well as a new grandchild on the way!

Although Sgt. Kozikowski's career with the Menominee County Sheriff's Department has ended, he will continue to serve the public as a true advocate for veteran rights. In fact, he is currently lobbying Congress to support legislation to provide mandatory funding for veterans health care. He has also been encouraging the members of veterans' organizations to write letters to Congress urging their support.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, as a former Michigan State Police Trooper myself, I have had the pleasure of knowing Sgt. Kozikowski over the years. As a resident of Menominee County, I have always trusted his dedicated service to the people of our community. I am also comforted to know that such a powerful advocate is working to strengthen veteran's legislation for our men and women of past and present wars.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in thanking Sergeant Dennis Kozikowski for his 30 years of service to the people of the State of Michigan and in wishing him well in his retirement endeavors. His commitment to community and to justice has been a model of public service. Dennis will be missed by the members of the Menominee County Sheriff's Department and the people he so competently and bravely served.

CONGRATULATING DR. NOEL
SMITH

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Noel Smith of Fresno, California as the honored recipient of the Community Health Champion Award from West Fresno Health Care Coalition.

Dr. Noel Smith has been an outstanding contributor in the Fresno community for the